

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, May 30, 1895, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 10 rue Nitot Paris, May 30th 1895. My darling Alec:

I have been thinking a good deal about your idea of coming over. I thought one plan was to have the children in France until September, that if Mamma came over in July I should come home then and stay in Baddeck the rest of the summer. I thought that the reason for this plan was that you were anxious to continue your flying machine experiments, if it had not been for them you would have come over yourself. Has the situation changed in any way? Do you still care to continue your experiments? If not I certainly don't see why you should, not come over, and it certainly would be terribly hard for me to leave my little girls over here. But if your experiments still possess the same interest I don't see why you should give them up. On the other hand if Mamma does not come I must stay with my children, for having started them in French it would not be right to stop them when they are fairly beginning and acquire something useful. Then I would indeed be very glad to see you here. If Mamma does not come the question will be before you, which do you want most, to rejoin your family or continue your experiments? and that will be for you to decide. I think I would rather you staid if your experiments are interesting, for you would be so restless and unhappy that we would all be also. But if your experiments are not so interesting and you want to come then pray come for I do want you very much.

Did I tell you that we had moved into our little apartment? In some ways our parlor is not as pleasant as my bedroom, for it has 2 no large French window looking over the garden, and being on the street, the roll of the wagons disturb me as the street is paved with rough stone blocks. But it is a pretty bright corner room, with a small window over the fireplace fronting the garden and forming a frame for the tall column of the Tour d' Eiffel, and a very large bay window on the street. The furniture is new and pretty although it certainly might be softer. Daisy's room opens into the parlor and has another large bay. On the other side the parlor is a large closet, and beyond that Elsie's and my room which has a big French window facing the garden. An outer door shuts in the three rooms and hall making us entirely private. We generally do leave the door wide open however, for the house is so quiet and so few people ever walk about that we never see any one in the halls. We have French breakfast in our room and dejeuner and dinner downstairs, and at nine all are expected to retire to their rooms and the lights are put out in the halls. We can however stay out until ten if we like, and of course needn't go to bed at all if we don't like. I wish you could see what beauties my peonies are, I bought them two days ago and they are perfectly glorious now and most delicately fragrant.

The children are much excited just now over the question of our going to the Battle of Flowers. I guess it's decided in the negative through inaction. I found that a livery-stable carriage would cost any where from fifty francs to a hundred and fifty for the afternoon and beside that there would be twenty francs entrance fees. The twenty francs would have to be forthcoming whether we went in livery carriage or common cab, and the crowd would be fearful,— 3 accordingly I didn't want to go and Elsie was not as enthusiastic when I told her I would expect her to pay part of her share from her own allowance. Monday is a holiday so I may take the children out of town over Sunday either to Rouen or Fountainbleau.

Mme. Blanc asked me to call on her again yesterday which we did. She said Mr. John La Farge had waited some time in the hope of seeing me. I was so sorry to miss meeting him, but did not understand that I was expected at any precise time so it was after half past five and we came at six. She was very cordial and pleasant and wants us to go to Gerardmen in the Voages Mountains for the summer, she says it is very cool and the air bracing and there is a lake there very good for boating and bathing. If I want to leave the children she recommends a family in the valley of the Oise not far from Paria, but she says it is almost impossible to find a family with whom it would be well to intrust a young girl. This family she says is perfectly trustworthy, she knows the mother almost as if they were sisters. The young lady of whom she spoke has not come yet but will. Mme. Blanc suggested I might take her with me for the summer and she would consider it a holiday.

I think Paris is an awfully expensive place to live in, it is so impossible to get about except in cabs, and they mount up so fast. The traimways and omnibuses are totally inadequate for the transportation of all who would use them. You see crowds of people standing on the sidewalks waiting for the buses to come, and they seem to come so seldom, and never to go anywhere in especial.

I have invested in cardboard, paste and brush today and mean 4 to begin my occupation of pasting in Mexican photographs right away. I don't see much chance of any literary work my day is so broken up, but perhaps things will settle down now. The children seem bright and happy and enjoy their studies at the Convent and their walks with Mlle. Filippi and their French novels. Elsie has finished hers, and has another. Don't you think she ought to go over her book again with the dictionary. She must have but a very fragmentary idea of much of what she read. I enclose her first attempt to describe in her own words her remembrance of a story in French she read. This was my idea, don't you think it is a good one? Both children are out with Mlle. Fillipi now.

The papers said it was very hot here yesterday, but we were not at all troubled by the heat. The wind blew fresh and cool through our rooms, and if we don't have very much hotter weather we shall

be almost as well off as at Baddeck. The situation is so high and there are no houses high enough to shut off all the air that is going so we are most comfortable. This house is a new one and the plumbing seems very good the supply of water very plentiful and at very high pressure.

Much love dear one, I am ever your own, Loving Mabel.